

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-7, 9, 10, and 12-30 are pending in the application, with claims 1, 16, and 23 being independent. Support for the claim amendments can be found in the original disclosure.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER § 102

Claims 16, 18, and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,486,898 to Martino et al (Martino). This rejection is respectfully traversed for at least the reasons outlined below.

Independent claim 16 is amended and, as amended recites a method comprising (emphasis added):

- displaying a first end point;
- displaying components associated with the first end point;
- displaying a second end point;
- displaying components associated with the second end point;
- displaying a common component associated with the first end point and the second end point;
- displaying a link between the common component and the first end point; and
- displaying a link between the common component and the second end point; and
- determining a path strength associated with the common component by, at least in part,;
- determining a first link strength for the link between the common component and the first end point;

- determining a second link strength for the link between the common component and the second end point; and
- calculating the path strength based at least in part on *multiplying* the first link strength and the second link strength.

In making out the rejection of this claim the Office argues claim 16 is anticipated by Martino. Applicant respectfully disagrees. Nevertheless, without conceding the propriety of the rejection and in the interests of expediting allowance of the application, claim 16 is amended to recite, “calculating the path strength based at least in part on *multiplying* the first link strength and the second link strength.” Applicant respectfully submits that Martino does not disclose such a method. Rather, Martino discloses organizing and displaying related information items in dependence upon a user’s indicated point of reference. (Col. 3, lines 12-13). Further, Martino discloses information items that are related to the point of reference are displayed with a prominence that reflects each item’s degree of separation from the user’s point of reference. (Col. 3, lines 15-17). Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that this claim stands allowable. Applicant notes that the Examiner tentatively agreed during the above-referenced interview that the cited reference did not appear to disclose this claim element. The Examiner also indicated that she would review the reference and update her search. Applicant thanks the Examiner for this preliminary indication.

For at least this additional reason, Applicant respectfully submits that this claim stands allowable.

Dependent claims 18 and 22 depend from claim 16, and rejections with regard to these claims should be withdrawn by virtue of the dependency. Moreover, these claims

recited features that, when taken together with those of claim 16, Martino does not disclose.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER §103

Claims 1-7, 9-10, 12-15, 29-30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,832,245 to Isaacs et al (Isaacs) in view of Martino and in further view of U.S. Publication Number 2005/0086238 to Nevin III (Nevin). This rejection is respectfully traversed because the Office has failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, for at least the reasons outlined below.

Independent claim 1 is amended and, as amended recites a method comprising (emphasis added):

- identifying components associated with a first end point in an environment;
- identifying components associated with a second end point in the environment;
- determining whether any of the identified components are associated with both the first end point and the second end point;
- identifying relationships between the first end point, the second end point, and any components associated with both the first end point and the second end point;
- displaying the relationship by, in part, displaying a social context associated with the first end point and a second context associated with the second end point; and
- *displaying associated information in response to a user's identification of either the first end point or the second end point.*

In making out the rejection of this claim, the Office argues that its subject matter is obvious over Isaacs in view of Martino and in further view of Nevin. Applicant respectfully disagrees. Nevertheless, without conceding the propriety of the rejection and in the interests of expediting allowance of the application, claim 1 is amended to recite,

“displaying associated information in response to a user’s identification of either a first end point or a second end point.” Applicant submits that the Office has failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness with respect to this claim.

Specifically, the Office’s *prima facie* case of obviousness fails for at least the reason that the cited references fail to teach or suggest all of this claim’s recited features. Applicant respectfully submits that this claim stands allowable. Applicant notes that the Examiner tentatively agreed during the above-referenced interview that the cited references did not appear to disclose this claim element. The Examiner also indicated that she would review the references and update her search. Applicant thanks the Examiner for this preliminary indication.

In addition, the Examiner cites Nevin for its alleged teachings of relationships including displaying a social context associated with the first end point and displaying a social context associated with the second end point. *See* Office Action, page 6. The Examiner goes on to state that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Isaac further in view of Martino with displaying relationships includes displaying a social context associated with the first end point and displaying a social context associated with the second end to give the user easier access to relevant data and visually present large amounts of data and the relationships between them as described by Nevin, referencing Figure 4 and paragraph 172, lines 3-5. *Id.* However, paragraph 249 of Nevin describes Figure 4 as follows:

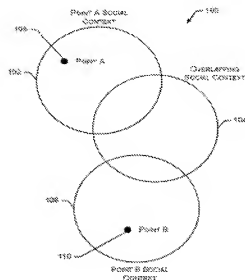
FIG. 4 is a screen-shot which shows the result of entering the simple command ‘show rocky’ (“rocky” representing the name of a user, who has previously entered data pertaining to himself into the system).

As evidenced by this excerpt, Nevin does not teach or suggest the claimed social context. Rather, Nevin teaches methods for presenting large amounts of data. Further, to assist the Office in appreciating the subject matter disclosed in Applicant's Specification, Applicant refers the Office to the following excerpt from Applicant's Specification:

Fig. 1 illustrates an example environment 100 containing various social contexts and points within those contexts. Environment 100 may also be referred to as a "social environment" or a "social network". A first social context 102 is labeled "Point A Social Context" and a second social context 106 is labeled "Point B Social Context". Another social context 104 overlaps a portion of social contexts 102 and 106, and is labeled "Overlapping Social Context". A particular social context includes any number of components, such as users that are related to one another and groups or departments associated with those users. For example, a social context associated with a particular user may include other individuals with which the particular user is associated, such as friends, co-workers, other members of common groups or clubs, and other members of common mailing lists. In another example, a social context associated with a particular project may include other components associated with that project, such as employees assigned to the project, persons managing the project, related projects, and other entities or organizations related to the project. An example overlapping social context contains one or more components that are common to the two overlapped social contexts, such as a common person or a common project. A particular social context, including an overlapping social context, may contain any number of components.

(Page 4 line 21 – page 5 line 14).

In addition, Fig. 1 is reproduced below to illustrate the claimed subject matter:



Accordingly, the screen shot in Fig. 4 of Nevin does not teach or suggest “displaying a social context associated with the first end point and a second context associated with the second end point,” as disclosed in the claimed subject matter.

Therefore, the Office’s arguments for rejecting claim 1 fails to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness. The Office has not shown that each and every element of claim 1 is taught or suggested by Isaacs in combination with Martino and Nevin. For at least these reasons, Applicant requests that the Office withdraw the §103 rejection.

Dependent claims 2-7, 9-10, and 12-15 depend from claim 1 and rejections with regard to these claims should be withdrawn by virtue of the dependency. Moreover, these claims recite features that, when taken together with those of claim 1, are neither

taught nor suggested in the references of record, either singly or in combination with one another.

For example, dependent claim 7 recites: a method as recited in claim 5 wherein identifying relationships includes identifying only the top ranked paths between the first end point and the second end point. Assuming for the sake of argument that Martino teaches or suggests the claimed subject matter, Martino does not teach or suggest “identifying only the top ranked paths between the first end point and the second end point.” The Examiner cites to FIG. 5 however, the specification describes FIG. 5 as follows:

FIG. 5 illustrates an alternative example display of a lattice network that uses location to indicate a relational distance from a reference node I7301, corresponding to the lattice network of FIG. 3. In this alternative example, both vertical and horizontal positioning is used to indicate degrees of separation from the reference node I7301, which is located in an upper left position in FIG. 5. Nodes of decreasing relationship to the reference node I7301 are placed increasingly to the right and down from the reference node I7301. As can be seen, distantly related nodes I3331 and I4332 are located in the lower right region of FIG. 5, while closely related nodes I0311, I2312, and I8313 are located predominantly in the upper left region of FIG. 5.

(Col. 4, lines 17-29).

As evidenced from the excerpt above, Martino does not teach or suggest “identifying only the top ranked paths between the first end point and the second end point.”

Therefore, dependent claim 7 stands allowable by virtue of the dependency. Additional, dependent claim 7 recites features that, when taken together with those of

claim 1, are neither taught nor suggested in the references of record, either singly or in combination with one another.

Claims 23-28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Martino in view of Nevin. This rejection is respectfully traversed because the Office has failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, for at least the reasons outlined below.

Independent claim 23 is amended and, as amended recites one or more computer-readable storage media having stored thereon a computer program that, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to:

- display a first end point in a social network and a social context associated with the first end point;
- display a second end point in a social network and a social context associated with the second end point;
- identify a common component associated with the first end point and the second end point;
- display the common component associated with the first end point and the second end point;
- display a link between the common component and the first end point;
- display a link between the common component and the second end point; and
- displaying associated information in response to a user's identification of either a first end point or a second end point.

In making out the rejection of this claim, the Office argues that its subject matter is obvious over Martino in view of Nevin. Applicant respectfully disagrees. Nevertheless, without conceding the propriety of the rejection and in the interests of expediting allowance of the application, claim 23 is amended to recite, “displaying associated information in response to a user's identification of either a first end point or a second end point.” Applicant submits that the Office has failed to establish a *prima facie*

case of obviousness with respect to this claim for at least the reasons stated above with respect to claim 1.

Therefore, the Office's arguments for rejecting claim 23 fails to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness. The Office has not shown that each and every element of claim 23 is taught or suggested by Martino in view of Nevin. For at least these reasons, Applicant requests that the Office withdraw the §103 rejection.

Dependent claims 24-28 depend from claim 23 and rejections with regard to these claims should be withdrawn by virtue of the dependency. Moreover, these claims recite features that, when taken together with those of claim 23, are neither taught nor suggested in the references of record, either singly or in combination with one another.

Claims 17 and 19-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Martino as applied to claims 16 and 23 above in view of Nevin. This rejection is respectfully traversed because the Office has failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, for at least the reasons outlined below.

Dependent claims 17 and 19-21 depend from claim 16 and therefore include all the features of independent claim 16, as well as additional features that each recites.

As discussed above, Martino lacks features of independent claim 16.

Nevin is cited for its alleged teaching of giving the user easier access to relevant data and visually present large amounts of data and the relationships between them. *See* Office Action, page 12. However, Nevin fails to remedy the deficiencies in Martino as discussed above with respect to claim 16.

Accordingly, claims 17 and 19-21 are allowable over the cited references, whether taken alone or in combination (assuming for the sake of argument that the documents can even be combined), by virtue of their dependence from an allowable base claim as well as for the additional features that each recites.

CONCLUSION

All pending claims are in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and prompt issuance of the subject application. If any issues remain that prevent issuance of this application, the Examiner is urged to contact the undersigned attorney before issuing a subsequent Action.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dated: January 16, 2008

By: /Emmanuel A. Rivera/
Emmanuel Rivera
Reg. No. 45,760
(509) 324-9256